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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001584

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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TAGS: [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [KPKO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: U/S KENNEDY MEETING WITH MFA U/S MUTRIF SIDDIQ

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Undersecretary for Management Patrick Kennedy met October 26 with MFA Undersecretary Mutrif Siddiq. U/S Kennedy thanked Siddiq for his assistance in clearing the NEC containers, and for expediting the issuance of non-diplomatic license plates for US Embassy vehicles following the assassinations of two mission members January 1, 2008. Kennedy noted that the US has a large official presence in Sudan due to the importance that the US places on the country. Siddiq responded by thanking U/S Kennedy for his visit but noted that the nature of politics between the two countries has tainted the bilateral relationship. "There is no excuse for this relationship," lamented Siddiq, "we love the US and see it as a model, and dream that someday Sudan will be like the US."

12. (C) Siddiq said his government has worked hard to improve the relationship with the US, noting that there are cultural differences but that they should not stand in the way. Siddiq described Sudanese disappointment with unfulfilled previous US promises of improved relations, such as at the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) negotiations in Naivasha, Kenya, when senior US officials promised that Sudan would be removed immediately from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List and that some US sanctions would be removed if the Sudanese government finalized a peace agreement, he said. Siddiq said that US sanctions are harming all Sudanese, not just the regime, and that it isn't possible to limit the effect of sanctions on the South, since between two and three million southerners live in the North, depend on the income they receive in the North, and send remittances to the South. Mutrif mused that, seen in the best possible light, perhaps US sanctions are "meant to coach us in the right direction," but urged that the US should "use the carrot and the stick, not just the stick." Siddiq acknowledged that Sudan isn't really in a position to pressure the US, because the US is a much larger country and "we are not equal," but expressed hope that relations between the two countries would improve.

13. (C) Kennedy and Siddiq agreed to look toward the future and do everything possible to cooperate to the extent possible on practical issues. Siddiq promised to continue to help facilitate the NEC project and said his government wants there to be a regular US embassy in Sudan with full consular (and especially visa) services. Kennedy said he would meet with the NEC construction contractor during his visit to ensure that the project is fully on track for completion in 12009. Siddiq requested assistance with the proposed new Sudanese Embassy in Washington, as well as with Sudanese diplomatic bank accounts in the U.S. - to ensure they are not affected by terrorism-related law suits. Siddiq complained that the GOS must pay \$3000 per month to its bank in the US so that the accounts may be audited, due to OFAC rules and the presence of Sudan on the State Sponsors of Terrorism

list. Siddiq complained that because of US sanctions, Sudanese diplomats in the US must request a license from OFAC "even to receive a smart card from the bank."

14. (C) Note: Siddiq handles management and security issues for foreign missions but also manages political aspects of Sudanese bilateral relationships, in addition to the all-important UN peacekeeping and deployment portfolios - in essence combining the duties of the Undersecretaries for Management and Political Affairs in the State Department. Siddiq is also a senior negotiator for the National Congress Party ruling regime in Sudan and the most senior member of the NCP in the Foreign Ministry along with State Minister Ali Karti. End note.

15. (C) Comment: Siddiq aired a familiar litany of complaints regarding US sanctions and the effect they have on Sudanese diplomatic missions in the US. The Sudanese genuinely do want better relations with the US albeit at minimal cost to the regime's stranglehold on power. Sudan's current round of relative cooperation and conciliatory rhetoric is driven by two issues looming on the horizon - a possible ICC indictment of President Bashir in January 2009 and concern about possible shifts in US policy on Sudan in the next US administration. In this regard, the Sudanese will not think twice about stalling the NEC project by once again refusing to clear containers if it believes that this pressure tactic might achieve something, though the regime is likely to tread lightly as first - as it is clear the regime wants a continued US official presence in Khartoum and does not want to jeopardize that presence, at least not for now. End comment.

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16. (U) U/S Kennedy was not able to clear this cable prior to transmission.  
FERNANDEZ